

Appln. No. 10/005,576  
Amdt. dated November 25, 2003  
Reply to Office Action of June 11, 2003

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the rejection of various of the claims of the captioned application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Initially, Applicants attorney wishes to thank Examiner Joerger for granting a recent interview during which proposed amendments to the claims and the distinctions over the prior art were briefly discussed.

Claims 1 and 12 have now been amended so as to incorporate limitations to the separate separator frame with the workpiece stop mounted thereon so that the sheet metal is bent about the stop due to the action of the suction holder spaced outwardly therefrom. Other clarifying amendments are also included in the amended claims.

Claims 2 and 13 have been rewritten into independent claim form as Claims 20 and 21 in view of the advice concerning allowability of the subject matter thereof.

Various dependent claims have been cancelled in view of the incorporation of the subject matter thereof into Claims 1 and 12 as amended.

Shiiki et al does not disclose or suggest the structure of Claims 1 and 12 as amended with a separate separator frame

pivotally mounted upon the lifter frame and including both a workpiece stop and at least one suction holder so as to produce the bending motion. The same is true with respect to the other cited prior art.

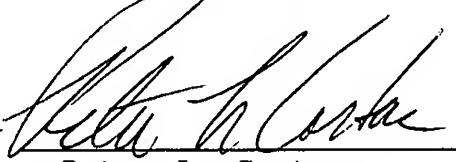
As the Examiner has recognized, the subject matter prior to Claims 2 and 13 was not disclosed in the prior art, and those claims have been rewritten into independent claim form.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the claims as amended are allowable and define a novel sheet lifter and separator. Early allowance thereof is earnestly solicited.

Enclosed herewith is a check in the amount of Eighty-Six Dollars (\$86.00) to cover the cost of an additional independent claim. Should there be any question as to the fee, please debit Account No. 03-3355.

Respectfully submitted,

SIEGFRIED DAOTLER

By   
Peter L. Costas  
Attorney for Applicant  
Registration No. 18,637  
(860) 241-2630